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influencing the interactive voice response system by the communication terminal equipment wherein the interactive voice response system communicates a request for reserving an available one of the at least one agent communication terminal equipment to the automatic call distribution system;

reserving, via the automatic call distribution system, the available one of the at least one agent communication terminal equipment; and

transferring, given the request for reserving, and reservation of, the agent communication terminal equipment, by the communication system and outside of the automatic call distribution system the communication terminal equipment from the interactive voice response system to the reserved agent communication terminal equipment.

REMARKS

The final Office Action and the Advisory Action were issued on pending claims 19-35. In this response, claim 19 has been amended and no claims have been added or cancelled. Thus, claims 19-35 are pending in the case.

In the final Office Action, claims 19-21, 25-27, 30, and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McCalmont, U.S. Patent No. 5,915,010. Claims 22 and 31-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McCalmont in view of Morganstein et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,020,095. Claims 23-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McCalmont in view of Williams et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,627,884. Claims 28-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McCalmont in view of Costello et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,510,351. Claim 34 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McCalmont in view of Morganstein et al. and further in view of Costello et al. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 19, the only independent claim, has been amended to further clarify the claimed invention. Claim 19 pertains to a method for incorporating functions of an automatic call distribution system in an interactive voice response system that is called and controlled by communication terminal equipment of a communication network. The method of claim 19 calls for, among other steps, transferring, given the request for reserving, and reservation of, the agent communication terminal equipment, by the communication system and outside of the automatic

call distribution system the communication terminal equipment from the interactive voice response system to the reserved agent communication terminal equipment.

One example of Applicants' invention is shown in Fig. 1. A call from a communication terminal equipment (KE) of a communication system (KS) is directly coupled to an interactive voice response system (IVR) without first passing through an automatic call distribution system (ACD). The communication system (KS) is normally a communication system of a public network. The automatic call distribution system (ACD) is not utilized until the communication terminal equipment (KE) influences the interactive voice response system (IVR) to request and reserve an agent. The automatic call distribution system (ACD) reserves the agent communication terminal equipment (AKE). The call from the communication terminal equipment (KE) is transferred or switched to the reserved agent communication terminal (AKE) by the communication system (KS). See the dotted line labeled 4 in Fig. 1. Accordingly, the automatic call distribution system (ACD) does not itself transfer or switch the call to the agent communication terminal equipment (AKE). Rather, the communication system (KS) transfers the communication terminal equipment (KE) outside of the automatic call distribution system (ACD) to the agent communication equipment (AKE).

Turning to claim 19, the transferring step is claimed as transferring...by the communication system and outside of the automatic call distribution system the communication terminal equipment from the interactive voice response system to the reserved agent communication terminal equipment.

Turning to McCalmont, McCalmont simply does not disclose or suggest the claimed transferring step. Referring to Fig. 1 of McCalmont, McCalmont shows a public network 113 connected to an automatic call distributor 110. The automatic call distributor 110 is connected to a voice response unit 180 and to a customer service representative telephone extension 123. In McCalmont, a customer call from the public network 113 passes through the automatic call distributor 110 to the voice response unit 180. Conversely, in Applicants' invention, the call from the communication terminal equipment (KE) of the communication system (KS) (analogous to the McCalmont public network 113) is directly connected to the interactive voice response system (IVR) without passing through the automatic call distribution system (ACD). In McCalmont, the automatic call distributor 110 transfers or switches the customer call of the public network 113 from the voice response unit 180 to the customer service representative

telephone extension 123. Conversely, in Applicants' invention, the communication system (KS) transfers or switches the call of the communication terminal equipment (KE) to the agent communication terminal equipment (AKE) outside of the automatic call distribution system (ACD).

Applicants' inventive method provides advantages over McCalmont. In McCalmont, the automatic call distributor 110 handles the transferring or switching of the customer call of the public network 113 to the voice response unit 180 and to the customer service representative telephone extension 123. Accordingly, the McCalmont automatic call distributor 110 must handle the load placed on it by controlling, transferring and switching the calls. Conversely, in Applicants' invention the communication system (KS) transfers or switches the call from the communication terminal equipment (KE) to the agent communication terminal equipment (AKE). This results in Applicants' automatic call distribution system (ACD) experiencing a lighter load because it does not transfer or switch the calls.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections have been overcome and request that they be withdrawn.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

Respectfully submitted,

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BY 

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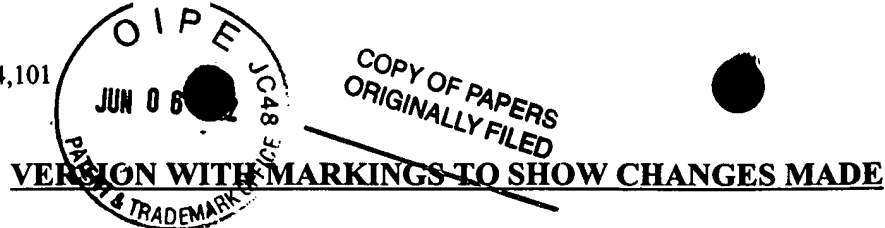
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In the Claims:

19. (Twice Amended) A method for incorporating functions of an automatic call distribution system in an interactive voice response system that is called and controlled by communication terminal equipment of a communication network, the method comprising the steps of:

directly coupling the automatic call distribution system and the interactive voice response system;

connecting both the interactive voice response system and the automatic call distribution system to a communication system of the communication network;

connecting at least one agent communication terminal equipment to the communication system;

allocating the at least one agent communication terminal equipment to the automatic call distribution system;

influencing the interactive voice response system by the communication terminal equipment wherein the interactive voice response system communicates a request for reserving an available one of the at least one agent communication terminal equipment to the automatic call distribution system;

reserving, via the automatic call distribution system, the available one of the at least one agent communication terminal equipment; and

transferring, given the request for reserving, and reservation of, the agent communication terminal equipment, by the communication system and outside of the automatic call distribution system the communication terminal equipment from the interactive voice response system to the reserved agent communication terminal equipment.

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